

**THE FEDERATION OF
CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS**

**ANNUAL REPORTS
2010**



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THE FEDERATION OF CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Federation Chairman's Report 2010

Last year was our Centenary, and we were fortunate to rejoice in this achievement with Peterborough Association hosting the AGM, where our inaugural meeting had been held in 1910; and Westminster Abbey Association hosting a most memorable and outstanding Festival in London, the heart of our nation's history. Sir David Willcocks, Dr Barry Rose, Geoffrey Mitchell and David Horner, four of our Vice Presidents were with us, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, our foremost Patron made time in his particularly busy schedule to address us most heartedly, and with great encouragement for the future. The Festival included many extra features, and all was done with great style. The Purcell Group made a considerable contribution for which we are most grateful. For our pride and pleasure the year was complemented with a bumper centenary magazine. As we step out into the next hundred years, increased membership under the new and relaxed rules have enabled many and varied associations to join, as outlined in the Secretary's Report. Warwick, our hosts for this year's AGM, was the first of these, and we welcome them all. If you hear of any associations involving those who sang the top line as youngsters, please forward their names to our Federation Secretary so that contact can be made.

I wish to give special thanks to all our officers, including the web master, for I am very much aware of the amount of work they have put into Federation matters tirelessly, and in an exemplary manner; largely at their own expense. We appreciate all this general goodwill, as well as the enjoyment engendered through our various associations.

Communications have been further increased beyond the website and magazine to include email newsletters, and hopefully four appointed executive members to further enhance our friendship with associations in future years. As Chairman I am also a member of the Friends of Cathedral Music, an organisation with very similar aims to our own. I look forward to their July AGM, and our continuing liaison as the years go by. I have been pleased to visit Gloucester, St Albans and Bradford as well as my own Rochester reunion: and I would mention that I am happy to be invited to any association functions, hoping that there is not a clash of dates.

Cathedral tours have become a firm and favourite facility of our Federation but, perhaps because of cost there were insufficient takers to support this year's Scandinavian tour. This puts me in mind of the outstanding tour of New Zealand in 2007. The very serious earthquake news from Christchurch has made this a very poignant and sobering scenario. At the time of writing it has only just happened. Emails and a letter of concern have been sent from the Federation to Christchurch Association, who had in 2007 been the very welcoming hosts for our visit.

We leave our Centenary Year behind in the belief that the Federation is in good heart, and assured of its continuing success in the years ahead.

Ian Henderson, Chairman

THE FEDERATION OF CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Federation Secretary's Report 2010

This year, the Executive Committee agreed to my suggestion to set up an email facility to enable a newssheet to be sent to you giving a summary of the main items that the Executive Committee has been discussing at their meetings, and other news, at very little cost to the Federation. Out of the current contacts on our mailing list, we only have 5 who do not have an email address and a copy is being posted to these individuals. This facility will also have the additional advantage of you being able to send me anything you want to circularise other members, as well as asking for the information to be loaded onto the "Latest News" page on the Federation website. I hope that more of you be able to take advantage of this facility.

A very proactive approach has been taken since the 2010 AGM in inviting new and lapsed members to consider joining or rejoining the Federation. I am pleased to report that a high number of applications have been received and approved. We welcome the following associations as affiliated members who will be new entries in this year's magazine bringing the total number of affiliated members to 55.

Bradford Cathedral Old Choristers' Association
Leeds Cathedral Former Choristers' Association
Saint Thomas Choir School Alumni Association, New York
Southwell Minster Old Choristers' Association
St. Michael's College Society, Tenbury Wells
Tewkesbury Abbey Schola Cantorum Association
Winchester College Quiristers

The list has also been extended to show the full name of your association together with your website and that of your cathedral, church, etc. With the magazine only being published annually, a similar list now appears on the website which can be kept up to date with changes on a regular basis. This will be a big improvement and will help to keep down the number of enquiries I receive. We are still in contact with other choral foundations, two of which were former members and hope to re-launch their associations this year.

It had been on our list of action points to try to establish a closer working relationship with other organisations such as the Friends of Cathedral Music. Last year we were approached by them to see if we would be willing to enclose one of their leaflets in with our magazine this year and we agreed to do that. In return, we have been offered space for an article in the autumn edition of their *Cathedral Voice* newsletter. The Executive Committee has agreed on the content of the article. This will be a wonderful way in which we can advertise the Federation to their 4,000 members and hopefully increase our membership and sales of the magazine. I hope that you can pass this information on to your members at some point and, if they are not already members of FCM, invite them to apply. FCM also publish a full A4 colour magazine twice a year and further details are available on their website at www.fcm.org.uk.

Please let me know if you would like to host the Festival in 2017 or any year after 2018. Your association or your Cathedral may have a special anniversary year coming up to which you would like to invite the Federation to be a part. If you decide that organising a festival is too much for your Association to manage, then hosting an Annual General Meeting on a Saturday in May would

be a much easier alternative. I am looking for hosts for 2016 onwards.

Finally, we hope that you will have more contact with and help from the Federation once the posts of the 4 Association Representatives have been filled after the 2011 AGM, so more detail on this to follow.

Richard Belton, Honorary Secretary

THE FEDERATION OF CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Federation Publications Officer's Report 2010

An encouraging aspect of the Federation's work has been the increasing number of associations applying for affiliation. The current magazine carries some guest articles from these associations as well as from others who have obtained full membership during the year, including St Thomas New York and Westminster Cathedral. A larger number of articles of general interest also appears this time; I hope it will give the lie to a member of an association a while back who, when asked why he no longer took the magazine, replied 'well, we only want to read about our own Association, and we get that from our Secretary'. I find the articles from ALL the Associations of consuming interest, especially as now the Directors of Music usually contribute news of their choirs.

Of course the most devastating news recently was that of our friends in Christchurch New Zealand. Many members remember the kindness and outstanding hospitality offered to them during the FCOCA tour there in 2007. Michael Hunter's article about the December quake has been overtaken by events, and an account appears in our magazine.

An annoying aspect is the increase in the postage cost of the magazine each year. A few years back it was 55p. Now it has advanced to nearly £1! For those associations who are finding it impossible to bear this cost, can I suggest that, at their annual mailing, they encourage members to become individual subscribers, by using the form available through their Secretary (I will send one on request), or via the website; this is infinitely better than simply cancelling their Association order to *Once A Chorister* altogether, which denies their members the hopefully ever increasing news and interest the magazine contains at (compared with others) a bargain price!

Michael Barry, Publications Officer

THE FEDERATION OF CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Federation Treasurer's Report 2010

You may have expected to see a slight increase to the Subscriptions shown in the Income column on page 7, as we have affiliated new associations during 2010. However, there were a few extra due payments at the end of the year, often caused by the schedule of individual associations' meetings, and so if you refer to the Debtors shown on page 8, you are able to add both the subscriptions and *Once A Chorister* payments to affirm that once again the magazine in its new format, continues to please. Albeit in a minimal way, it is hoped that interest will start accruing again in 2011 once we re-organise our bank balances.

Unusually we have a plus figure appearing under the Expenditure column, as we always try to cover postage and packing costs as realistically as we can! With a slight increase to the premium for Trustee Indemnity Insurance, necessary of course, we remain with our long-standing brokers who continue to provide us good service. As implied in Andrew's report, 2010 saw a gradual build-up of stock for the "new" shop, hence the £966 in this column, although further expenditure on new items in 2011 is not envisaged, except for required further stock. Computer and website expenses have been reduced as hoped; much following the help given by Richard Watts in this area.

Those of you who attended the Westminster Abbey Festival last year will have realised what a great weekend it was, and everyone enjoyed it immensely, thanks to the Westminster Abbey Association committee. Unfortunately, due to circumstances prevailing at the last minute, the booked landing stage for the Thames cruise was changed, and although some compensation from the company was sought, it was felt that transport needed to be provided for the delegates because of distance and time restraints. You will know providing coaches is never a cheap option, especially in central London, and as a result a loss was generated in the Westminster Association's accounts. The Executive Committee considered that this should be covered by the Federation, considering also the payments made as a result of previous Festival profits, hence the £1,427 Festival Payment denoted.

And so, we did encounter a deficit again in 2010 of £2,724. I trust that this will be inverted in this year's accounts. At this point can I mention a slight change to the 2009 accounts as suggested by our accountants this year: Last year the figure for the Clifford Sadler Legacy grants was shown to include the £3,148 Benevolent Fund balance, whereby it should have been excluded, reducing the actual deficit last year by this amount to £51,198, the figure shown for 2009 in this year's accounts. There you see you thought you would never hear of the Benevolent Fund again!!!

A slight disappointment when looking at the Balance Sheet therefore, albeit that I still believe healthy in view of what has gone on in 2010. Not until virtually the end of the year when the bank announced an actual credit interest rate, has it been possible to consider moving monies from current account. Nevertheless, whereas in the past we came to rely on interest to "pay for" some expenses, this is unlikely to be so for the foreseeable future, so we have to think of other ways to generate funds. A small way may be to increase subscriptions, which have remained at £10 for many years...

Michael Lake, Honorary Treasurer

THE FEDERATION OF CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Federation Marketing Officer's Report 2010

I am delighted to report that our Centenary year has been a record year for the Federation Shop. For the first time we have broken the £1000 barrier, with total sales for 2010 being **£1008.00**. This is made up of **£155.00** taken at the AGM in Peterborough, **£455.00** at the Westminster Abbey Festival and **£398.00** in postal sales.

From these sales we have made £352.00 profit for Federation Funds. This may seem low to some of you, but there are a number of factors that have affected this profit margin. We try to sell most items with a mark up of between 80% and 100% on the cost price, and on the items sold at full retail price this is the case. However, as reported last year, we decided to discount a number of 'sale' items with the view to reducing the amount of stock and the number of lines that we hold. This resulted in a large write off last year and there is now zero profit from the sale of these items. We also purchased a large number of A4 plastic wallets from the Winchester OCA who over-ordered for their Festival in 2009. We have subsequently sold these on to the hosts of the next two festivals at cost price, preferring to offer a service to three of our member Associations rather than seek a profit.

I am pleased to report that many of the sale items mentioned above have been sold. We no longer have any old design Polo Shirts, Umbrellas or A5 OAC Binders, the number of Sweatshirts is greatly reduced and all the old design Burgundy ties, plus most of the blue, have gone. However the remaining 80 green ties and 35 mugs show only a small decrease in stock numbers, despite the low price.

Almost all of the five new lines introduced last year have sold well. The new tie design has, on the whole, been well received and with 14 sales has proved popular despite only being available since the Festival in September. The decision to have some made in silk seems to have been a good one as they are selling just as well as their polyester equivalent. We have even sold 4 fleeces which, considering they retail at £30.00, is an excellent result. Our best seller this year has been the new greetings cards, selling 49 packs in total. The cartoon designs were drawn by a friend of mine who has donated the artwork for the benefit of the Federation. However, the one disappointment has been the Centenary Mouse Mat. We have sold just 12, less than a quarter of the small stock we initially purchased.

In my report last year I said that, where at all possible, we would not hold more than £2,500.00 worth of stock at any one time. The current value of the stock is £2,504.10 which has a retail value of £4,431.50. Once the remainder of the 'sale' stock has been sold, we will be well within this £2,500 ceiling.

I am still working on the Christmas cards promised last year and hope that we will have some suitable designs ready for the Festival in Guildford. This will be the only new line this year as we cannot keep adding lines at the rate we did last year.

Thank you to everyone who has patronised the emporium this past year. Let us hope that 2011 will be an equally successful year. With your help and continued support it can be!

Andrew Orland, Marketing Officer